

As the company continues to excel, I am honored to congratulate the Gardners and the many outstanding employees of Savage Precision Fabrication, Inc. The award-winning title you've received from the Small Business Administration this year is hard-earned and well-deserved.

God bless you, and I salute you.

MEMBER-DESIGNATED TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS DATABASE INITIATIVE

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 29, 2010

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to announce a new initiative to promote transparency and accountability with regard to Member-designated projects within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: a searchable database of all Member-designated projects included in Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure bills.

On the first day of the new Democratic majority of the 110th Congress, under the leadership of Speaker NANCY PELOSI, the House of Representatives adopted Rules to institute specific requirements with regard to Member-designated projects: congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, and limited tariff benefits. See clause 9(e), 9(f), and 9(g) of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives of the 111th Congress. For each Member-designated project, a Member of Congress must certify that neither the Member nor his or her spouse has a financial interest in the project. See clause 17 of rule XXIII. In addition, each committee report on a bill must identify any congressional earmarks included in the bill. These transparency and accountability requirements also apply to manager's amendments and Conference Reports. As Chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I have vigorously enforced these rules.

In addition, in the interests of full disclosure, transparency, and accountability, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, at my direction, requires Members of Congress to comply with all of the requirements of clause 9 of rule XXI and clause 17 of rule XXIII, even if the earmark rules do not apply, if the Member of Congress requests that the Committee take legislative action targeted to a specific State, locality, or Congressional district. For instance, the Committee requires Members to certify requests for corrections to descriptions of previously designated projects, such as corrections to high-priority projects that were included in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users—Technical Corrections Act of 2008 (P.L. 110–244), even though the corrections do not involve any new funding. See Committee Print 110–175. The Committee also requires Members to certify requests for General Services Administration, GSA, Capital Investment and Leasing Program Resolutions, GSA Public Building Project Survey Resolutions, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Survey Resolutions, even though congressional earmark rules do not apply to these Committee actions.

In the 111th Congress, we have built upon these efforts. Member-designated projects can play an important role in certain programs, such as the Federal-aid highway program. They provide constituents with a chance to weigh in directly with their elected officials on their community priorities, and allow Members an opportunity to advocate for surface transportation and mobility improvements that may be overlooked by a State Department of Transportation. Yet, it is also necessary to use a commonsense approach to dealing with projects that are complete or no longer viable. Earlier this week, on July 27, 2010, the House passed, by a vote of 394–23, H.R. 5730, the “Surface Transportation Earmark Rescission, Savings, and Accountability Act”, introduced by the gentlewoman from Colorado, Ms. MARKEY, to clear the books of projects that will not go forward and save taxpayer money. The bill eliminates a total of \$713 million in unobligated funding for 309 Member-designated projects contained in four previous surface transportation acts enacted over the past two decades. Similarly, during consideration of H.R. 4715, the “Clean Estuaries Act of 2010”, in the House in April of this year, I offered an amendment, which the House adopted, to strike the statutory earmarks included in the National Estuary Program under current law.

In addition, the Committee has adopted a series of Member-designated project reform principles to further promote transparency and accountability. The Committee requires Members of Congress to:

Provide specific information on the type, location, total cost, percentage of total cost of the project, that the request would finance, and benefits of the project;

Provide at least one letter of support for the project from state or local government agencies; certify that neither the Member nor his or her spouse has any financial interest in a project requested; and

Post requests for projects on the Member's website.

Today, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure takes another step in its continuing effort to provide unparalleled transparency and accountability of Member-designated projects. We launch a searchable database of all Member-designated projects included in Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure bills in the 110th and 111th Congresses.

The Member-designated projects database, located on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure website, includes the ability to search Member-designated projects by Member of Congress, State, Congressional district, bill, bill title, and amount. Each Member-designated project includes an electronic copy of the individual “no financial interest” certification of the Member of Congress and, beginning with H.R. 5892, the “Water Resources Development Act of 2010”, a copy of a letter from the state or local government expressing support for the project. Finally, the Committee makes copies of all Member-designated project requests available in the Committee office.

As Chairman, I am deeply committed to transparency and accountability in all of the activities of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. I look forward to working with public interest groups to endeavor to find even more ways to shine a light on the actions of our Committee.

HUGH HAZELWOOD RECOGNIZED AS 2010 FELLOWSHIP HONOREE!

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 29, 2010

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Hugh Hazelwood, the Vice President of New Business Development for LIBERTY Dental Plan located in Irvine, California. Together with his wife, Marsha, they strive to provide quality union negotiated benefits to union members throughout California and Nevada.

Liberty Dental Plan is currently 700,000 members strong and employs union members to take care of their brothers and sisters concerns and needs.

Hugh started his working career at a very young age in the family business in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Hugh learned early on that success is equated to giving back to worthwhile charities and the community and dedication to his employer.

Hugh's past volunteer endeavors have included The Association for the Research of Childhood Cancer, The Leukemia Society, and various food banks. He currently serves as a Vice President on the Board of Directors for Guide Dogs of America.

Marsha and Hugh were married on Valentine's Day in 1998, and enjoy working together. Liberty Dental Plan allows them the time and resources to give back to the community.

For his many years of dedicated service to the organized labor movement and to our community, I am pleased in joining others to honor Hugh Hazelwood as the Fellowship Honoree at the 28th Annual John S. Lyons Memorial Banquet in San Diego on September 11, 2010.

CONGRATULATIONS TO AMERICAN LEGION LEON OGIER POST NO. 2

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 29, 2010

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, it has come to my attention that on August 7, 2010, the American Legion Leon Ogier Post No. 2 will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the construction of Memorial Hall, a place the post has called home since 1922. This sturdy building befits an organization that has provided unwavering service to the Nevada community for more than 8 decades.

Completed in 1910, Memorial Hall was originally constructed by the citizens of Vernon County to be the home of Company G of the Fifth Regular Missouri National Guard, the company that ably fought in the Spanish-American War. Twelve years later, the building was deeded to the American Legion Leon Ogier Post No. 2 and was renamed Memorial Hall.

It is fitting that a structure which has stood the test of time bears the name Memorial Hall. This building and the American Legion post housed within are enduring testaments to the men and women who lost their lives in defense of our country and to those who have

returned from battle to once again serve our communities. While our Nation's veterans may stop wearing the uniform of the Armed Forces, these brave men and women never stop serving. And, it's comforting to know that the American Legion is dedicated to providing support and stability to these veterans.

The Leon Ogier Post No. 2 has become a fixture of the Nevada community. From the annual kids Christmas program, a tradition that dates back to 1922, to the meal delivery program during the holidays, this post has set a high standard of service. The fabric of the community is strong due in no small part to the Leon Ogier Post No. 2.

Madam Speaker, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the construction of Memorial Hall, let us all take a moment to thank our veterans and the organizations that support them. As we celebrate this important milestone, I trust my fellow members of the House will join me in wishing the American Legion Leon Ogier Post No. 2 the very best in the next 100 years.

CHINA'S UTTER DISREGARD FOR BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 29, 2010

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I submit an AFP article detailing a tragic story which illustrates the Chinese government's callousness and utter disregard for basic human rights.

AFP reports that China repatriated an 81-year old former South Korean prisoner of war who fled North Korea literally decades after first being captured.

China regularly repatriates North Korean refugees, in violation of their international obligations oftentimes sending these individuals back to certain punishment and possible death. The Chinese government simply doesn't care.

CHINA SENDS S. KOREAN POW BACK TO N.
KOREA

SEOUL.—China has repatriated an 81-year-old former South Korean prisoner of war who had fled North Korea decades after being captured, a newspaper report and an activist said Tuesday.

Dong-A Ilbo quoted an unidentified government official as saying the man surnamed Jung was sent back despite intensive diplomatic efforts by Seoul to bring him to the South.

A foreign ministry spokeswoman said she had no information.

"The government made tremendous diplomatic efforts but he was eventually sent back to the North," the source was quoted as saying.

South Korea had contacted Chinese diplomatic authorities more than 50 times since Jung's arrest, the daily said.

Choi Sung-Yong, an activist who campaigns for the return of South Korean abductees, said Jung was forcibly returned to the North in September last year, about a month after being arrested in China where he was hiding.

He said Jung was arrested eight days after he fled the North with the help of South Korean activists.

China repatriates escapees from North Korea as illegal immigrants even though they can face harsh punishment back home.

By Seoul's official account 494 South Koreans, mostly fishermen, were seized in the Cold War decades following the war. Seoul also says more than 500 prisoners of war were never sent home after the Korean War armistice was signed on July 27, 1953.

North Korea denies holding any south-erners against their will, even though some have managed to escape from the hunger-stricken country.

SECURING AIRCRAFT COCKPITS AGAINST LASERS ACT OF 2010

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 27, 2010

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for H.R. 5810, which amends title 18 of the United States Code to provide penalties for aiming laser pointers at airplanes. The effect of laser pointer glare on the windows of airplane cockpits is extremely dangerous to pilots. Laser glare that incapacitates pilots can endanger all other people onboard the aircraft. In order to prevent unnecessary harm to pilots, airplane passengers, and other airline employees, deliberate aiming of laser pointers at airplanes must be regulated.

Pilots experience laser glare in cockpits at a rate that has steadily increased over the past fifteen years. In 2009 alone, 1600 individual laser-aircraft incidents occurred. The intensity with which laser light reflects off cockpit glass can result in varying degrees of danger for pilots, from simple distraction by the bright flash of laser light to temporary flash blindness that greatly reduces their ability to capably navigate the aircraft. If the laser light is aimed from a near enough distance, pilots can sustain permanent eye damage from the brightness of the laser light. In some cases, pilots have even taken evasive action, confusing the laser light for the dot-type laser reticle of a weapon.

Eleven states have already enacted laws regulating the use of laser pointers around aircraft. While the use and ownership of small laser pointers is legal, this legislation is vital to preventing laser pointer users from accidentally harming or incapacitating pilots. I support this bill, in the hope that it will help Americans to be more careful in their use of laser pointers, and realize the grave consequences their actions can have for our Nation's pilots and aircraft passengers.

I urge my colleagues to also support this important resolution.

INTRODUCTION OF THE IMPROVING ACCESS TO MEDICARE COVERAGE ACT

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 29, 2010

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, today on the eve of Medicare's 45th anniversary, I rise to recognize the tireless work and fierce vigilance of an organization that has prioritized the care needs of Medicare beneficiaries, the

Center for Medicare Advocacy, as well as bring to light a coverage issue that the agency has been worked on for years: lengthy hospital observation stays.

Earlier this summer, I had discussions with leaders of the Center for Medicare Advocacy about lengthy hospital observation stays which has inhibited care for Medicare beneficiaries. Excessive time on hospital observation status has been shown to create two potential problems for Medicare beneficiaries. First, prescription drugs administered in the hospital during an observation stay are not included in the inpatient deductible cap, which can easily become unaffordable for patients and their families if the medications are not included in the beneficiary's Part D formulary. Secondly, time spent on observation status in a hospital is not counted towards the three-day inpatient hospital stay required for the beneficiary to receive skilled nursing care. Both potential consequences create financial and care burdens for Medicare beneficiaries.

Earlier in the month, I met with the Renshaw family from my district that had been negatively affected by a lengthy hospital observation status. After falling and breaking his hip, Mr. Renshaw, an elderly Medicare beneficiary, was taken to a local hospital treatment where he was subsequently put on observation status. He remained in the hospital for four days. After he was released, Mr. Renshaw required skilled nursing care for his rehabilitation. However, because Mr. Renshaw was placed on observation status instead of admitted officially as an inpatient, his time in the hospital did not count towards the Medicare three-day hospital stay required for skilled nursing care. His family was forced to write a check for nearly \$10,000 in order to get him the care that he needed because Medicare would not cover this benefit.

In response to the Center for Medicare Advocacy's vigilance on this issue and the experiences shared with me by the Renshaw family, I am introducing the Improving Access to Medicare Coverage Act. My legislation will fix this unfair component of Medicare law that arbitrarily differentiates between patients on inpatient versus observation status with obtaining necessary skilled care. The Improving Access to Medicare Coverage Act will count a beneficiary's time on observation towards the three-day hospital stay requirement for skilled nursing care. And while my legislation does not address the challenges associated with unaffordable out-of-pocket prescription drug and other costs associated with lengthy hospital observation stays, I look forward to working with the Center for Medicare Advocacy on finding a long-term solution to this urgent problem.

HONORING KATHLEEN SCHUERMAN

HON. STEVE DRIEHAUS

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 29, 2010

Mr. DRIEHAUS. Madam Speaker, today I want to recognize the 100th birthday of someone who is not only a constituent of mine, but a woman very dear to my heart, my great aunt, Kathleen Schuermann.

Our family will soon gather to mark this occasion, and there's so much to celebrate.